

INTRODUCTION

The incumbent serves as Plant Protection and Quarantine Officer-in-Charge (PPQO) of an organizational unit, having statewide responsibility for resolving problems of a controversial nature. The work requires application of various quarantines, regulations, and procedures, and involves one or more of the following:

The incumbent is the first level of program administration in designated area. The incumbent is responsible for managing active large-scale survey, regulatory, control, or eradication programs requiring relatively large-scale fleet management, significant seasonal work force, high degree of logistical planning, etc. Plans the technical approach for inspection, treatment, survey and eradication activities or other quarantine problems. Establishes and modifies techniques and procedures within established program policies. Plans for sufficient supplies and equipment and makes recommendations for maintenance and replacements.

Represents PPQ for all State Agricultural Cooperative Programs, usually including, but not limited to, the following: Cooperative National Pest Survey (assists cooperator - usually a State University and/or State Agricultural Department - in preparation of Annual Agreement/Work Plan, participates on Work Plan Committee, and evaluates State accomplishments under Agreement to authorize payment of Federal funds); Contact Point Officer for Export Certification (reviews and evaluates Cooperator reports, trains or recommends training for Cooperators, reviews qualifications of Cooperators in the Export Program); other similar cooperative agreements or memorandums of understanding, including those with other Federal agencies regarding office space or administrative services.

Plans and acts as facilitator with various organizations, federal, state, and local (county/district) governments, associations, etc. on issues that are often controversial.

Uses a high level of persuasion to gain cooperation from groups that may have opposing views and interests.

Gathers and analyzes information to prepare documentation illustrating impact of program activities within geographical areas (i.e. environmental assessments, etc.,) involving development of new information or substantial depth of analysis.

Reports work progress and achievement of goals and objectives to higher level management. Establishes budget estimates based on past experience, anticipated workload, and staffing of the unit.

The incumbent is responsible for the day-to-day activities of the unit. Technical advice and assistance are available from the next level of supervision on difficult and unusual problems.

Plans, schedules, coordinates, and directs the work of other employees who may be assigned to the unit. Approves leave, evaluates employees' performance based upon established standards, resolves complaints, and identifies developmental and/or training needs of the employees. No more than one or two full-time employees are supervised continuously, but the incumbent may, from time-to-time, direct the work of additional temporary employees, TDY employees, or cooperators on projects or for temporary periods usually not exceeding a few months.

FACTOR 1 - Knowledge Required by the Position

Knowledge of biological and agricultural science and of Plant Protection and Quarantine programs, activities, and regulations to perform the full range of port and/or domestic work.

Thorough knowledge of quarantine programs, regulations, and policies sufficient to serve as the final authority in resolving problems of a controversial nature and to modify or establish techniques for situations not covered by applicable guides or precedents.

Comprehensive, practical knowledge of treatment methods and techniques to handle difficult treatment and control operations, environmental assessments, etc.

It is mandatory that the incumbent of this position be certified according to the USDA pesticide applicator certification program within the prescribed time established previously.

FACTOR 2 - Supervisory Controls

The incumbent works under general supervision and receives assignments in terms of the overall objectives and funds available.

The officer has a continuing responsibility to work independently in planning the work program to determine the order and priority of individual projects, making any changes required by circumstances or planning the technical approach to difficult treatment or other plant quarantine problems.

Because of the remote location, the work is reviewed through formal or informal reports, discussions of actions taken, and periodic visits. Completed work is accepted as technically sound and reviewed from the overall standpoint of effectiveness and efficiency.

FACTOR 3 - Guidelines

Guides include agency regulations, directives, manuals, treatment instructions, and other administrative guidelines.

The guides do not cover all problems, situations, or circumstances encountered by the office. The OIC must use experience and judgment in establishing, modifying, and/or adapting treatments, inspections, and distribution and safety procedures, and in solving problems in treatment and regulatory work.

In connection with large-scale seasonal emergency programs, the OIC must use more than ordinary resourcefulness in developing operating procedures or adapting new methods or compromises. Exercises judgment in advising local and State agency personnel on environmental laws and requirements and applicability relative to expenditure of Federal funds in cooperative projects.

FACTOR 4 - Complexity

The incumbent performs the full range of duties performed by officers at the GS-9 level as well as providing the expertise and final authority for activities located in a remote area with minimal supervision from a higher level manager. This includes administrative considerations such as budget reports, equipment, day-to-day assignments of other officers assigned, and coordination with commercial and government organizations on cooperative agricultural ventures.

The work of the OIC is usually performed at a remote location and represents the first level of program administration. He/she is responsible for taking action on cases where guides and precedents are lacking. The officer must make an assessment of the situation in terms of pest risk, types of commodities, and program requirements to facilitate inspection of treatment procedures but also to ensure that policies and regulations are adhered to.

The work requires the OIC to use sound judgment in planning the technical approach, in determining the order and priority of work, and in adapting and modifying control methods and techniques. If sound judgment is not used, a precedent could be established that provides a poor framework for carrying out program requirement.

FACTOR 5 - Scope and Effect

The purpose of the work is to enforce regulations in accordance with established criteria, various regulations which govern the movement of prohibited, restricted, and unrestricted plants, plant material, and animal by-products and which are designed to prevent the spread of foreign pests and disease; to gather, develop, and analyze information to prepare documents (such as environmental assessments or equivalent reports) to illustrate impact of program activities; such work involves development of new information or a substantial depth of analysis.

The work contributes to the health and marketability of agricultural and animal resources and to the public's understanding of the need for and voluntary compliance with agricultural and other quarantines. Additionally, farmers, ranchers, and other members of the public are protected against the effects of destructive insects, diseases, and weeds. In large states where agriculture is an active and important industry, and where relatively large-scale survey or eradication programs are undertaken regularly, the work has considerable influence on the development or effectiveness of Federal-State-Local Agricultural cooperation, and PPQ policies and programs within the State.

Factor 6 - Personal Contacts

Personal contacts are with business and personal travelers, including persons of various nationalities, socioeconomic groups, and professional level, e.g. diplomats, clerks, nonresidents with no English-speaking capability, officers of Federal and state enforcement agencies, importers and exporters, nursery personnel, contractors, employees of transportation and shipping companies, including ship's crews, and material handling crews. These contacts are usually moderately unstructured and take place in diverse places such as a ship's engine room, storeroom, or bridge, onboard aircraft, at international borders, and in warehouses or sales yards, in offices and conference rooms.

FACTOR 7 - Purpose of Contacts

The contacts are established to enforce regulations; to explain methods, procedures, and objectives of the Plant Protection and Quarantine programs; to obtain voluntary cooperation of the interested parties; and to search for and locate plant pests. Often the people with whom the officer deals are cooperative (or at least neutral in their attitude); however, the OIC's contacts are often to negotiate, influence, or persuade individuals with conflicting interests or viewpoints (as when cooperatively-funded projects, such as a major grasshopper control project, are at stake) on the benefits of the use or nonuse of various methodologies or alternative courses of action.

FACTOR 8 - Physical Demands

The work requires some physical exertion such as long periods of standing at passenger counters or lengthy microscopy sessions, and recurring bending, walking, crouching, stooping, and reaching.

FACTOR 9 - Work Environment

The work involves such tasks as working around farms, railroad yards, aircraft cargo areas and docks. In some of these areas, protective clothing such as hard hats must be worn. The employee also works around poisons and toxic fumigants and may wear protective clothing such as masks and goggles.